

# ROLE-PLAYING GAME (RPG) APPLICATION TO FOSTER ENGLISH VOCABULARY AND GRAMMAR FOR EFL STUDENTS

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**Abstract:** This research focuses on Role-Playing Game application as an English learning media of vocabulary and grammar for EFL students. RPG application provides vocabulary and grammar learning materials in interesting way to create a new learning atmosphere where the students do not get easily bored when learning those aspects. The steps of this developmental research (RnD) are analyzing, designing, developing, and evaluating. The research subjects are the students of Universitas Muhammadiyah Metro. The instrument of this research is questionnaire. The questionnaire in this research is used to collect data which is divided into two aspects, readability and implementability. The data are analyzed using Percentage Analysis Data. The result shows that the product is developed well. The readability aspect, the result of one-to-one is 72%, then in small group is increased to 80% and in the field test it is 87%. The implementability aspect, the result of one-to-one is 71%, in small group is 81% and in field test is 87%. Thus, the product is developed well after each phase of the research. Based on the result of the research, it can be concluded that Materials in RPG application can be learned attractively and interestingly.

**Keywords:** Games, Grammar, Role-Playing, Vocabulary

## INTRODUCTION

The EFL students in Muhammadiyah University of Metro must be able to communicate at least on two basic components material of language, vocabulary and grammar. According to Harmer (1993,153) if language structures make up the skeleton of language, then it is vocabulary that provides the vital organs and the flesh. Thus, Far (2016,33) mentioned that vocabulary and grammar are extremely needed in every case of language use particularly English. The proficiency of understanding and using English skills; speaking, listening, writing, and reading, basically depends on vocabulary and grammar mastery. Hargie (2006, 20) elaborated that

those are the most common communicative skills. If a person has lack of vocabulary in any language, he or she will never know what to listen, what to speak, what to read, and what to write. When a person is lacking of grammar mastery in any language, he or she will never know how to speak and write correctly. Therefore, vocabulary and grammar are really important.

It is proven from the pre-survey of vocabulary and grammar conducted by the researcher. The pre-survey showed that 2 out of 36 students got less than 20 in the result of vocabulary and grammar. While 4 students got score around 21-41 in the same test, 17 students got 42-62 score in the same test. And 13

students got better score in 63-83 although the score is not reaching the standard for university students.

Beside those two basic material components of English, vocabulary and grammar, the students of university are also demanded to be communicatively skillful in using English. They should be able to use English as a language, not only as a subject of study. The condition of the communication is needed to train university students to learn English. They should be able to use the right word and the right grammar in many different conditions. Thus, the teaching of English is not able to be separated to other material components like giving kinds of specific expression or writing specific text.

According to Cremin (2009,1-2), creativity emerges as children become absorbed in actively exploring ideas, initiating their own learning and making choices and decisions about how to express themselves using different media and language modes. In responding to what they read, view, hear and experience, children use their literacy skills and transform their knowledge and understanding in the process. From the expert overview above, the media to learn English should give a great role to the students, so they can actively participate. Role-play is one of old technique in language teaching and learning which gives a big portion of role to the students. According to Patel and Jain (2008, 99) students should be provided real life situations.

Game is one of an easy interacted media, for the students who are able to be played everywhere. Game is able to give big portion of participation to the

students. According to Davis (2009,229). Board games and computer games have been developed to teach students about subjects as diverse as congressional redistricting and options for reform, life in a Darfur refugee camp, and the challenges of distributing food and resources to civilians caught in a war zone. The effect of role-play technique which gives a big portion of participation and the conspicuousness and the interactivity of game can be a great impact for students' learning achievements in English. In conclusion, the researcher will develop a Role-Play Game (RPG) application as a media to learn English.

## **THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK**

### **Role-Playing Game (RPG)**

#### **Application**

Role-Playgame(RPG) application is not a kind of technique in teaching like role play and game. it is kind of media which is used in electronic application like computer and/or laptop. Davis (2009, 229) stated that in role playing, students are given a situation and a cast of characters, and they improvise dialogue and actions. Gibson, Aldrich, Prensky (2007, 4) described game as a competitive activity that is creative and enjoyable in its essence, which is bounded by certain rules and requires certain skills. In the same book (2007, 3), Heinich, Molenda, Russell, and Smaldino (2002) define a game as an activity, in which participants follow prescribed rules that differ from those of real life while striving to attain a challenging goal. Furthermore, Davis (2009, 229) stated that virtual worlds lend themselves to role playing and

scenario building that allow learners to assume responsibilities without incurring real-world consequences. In conclusion, RPG application is a computer game application which gives student real interactive experience learning through role-playing virtual world creatively and enjoyably.

### **Learning Media**

In Harmer (2007, 176) stated that, yet we should not see them (learning resource/media) as methodologies for learning, but rather as tools to help us in whatever approaches and techniques we have chosen to use. Since media is a tool to help teacher facilitates students to get their learning process, teacher should maximize the potential of learning resource to be an optimal tool to facilitate students learn.

### **English Vocabulary**

Hiebert and Kamil (2005, 3) stated that vocabulary is the knowledge of meanings of words. From Penny (1991, 60) Vocabulary can be defined, roughly, as the words we teach in the foreign language. In Thornbury (2002, 15) we have been talking about the importance of having an extensive vocabulary - that is knowing lots of words. According to Vygotsky in Thornbury (2002, 1) a word is a microcosm of human consciousness. In conclusion, vocabulary is the knowledge of meaning of words which is taught for another language.

### **Fundamental English Grammar**

Grammar can be defined as a rule in the language. According to Weaver (1996:2), grammar is a set of prescription or rules for using language. It explained that grammar construct language as a rule. Weaver

(1996:2) explained more about four major senses of grammar, those are:

1. Grammar as description of synthetic structure.
2. Grammar as prescription for how to use structures and words.
3. Grammar as rhetorically effective use of synthetic structures.
4. Grammar as the functional command of sentence structure that enables us to comprehend and produce language.

### **METHODOLOGY**

The steps bellow are the summary of the research procedures that the researcher will do. Those are:

#### **Analyzing**

In this part, the researcher will identify aspects of the subjects. The aspects consist of some points like learning environment, and subjects' knowledge and skills. This step covers the analysis of the needs from students in learning process, the problems in learning process, and the problem solving for the students. After this step, the researcher will progress to the next step which is designing phase.

#### **Designing**

Designing is the phase of planning on a solution from the problem which is analyzed before. In this phase, the researcher will try to pull out a solution which is in product form. The product will be an application game which adapted from the subjects' needs, problems, and weakness. The next phase will be developing the design. Developed product become a better product. When it is done, the research will move on to the next phase, implementing.

### **Implementing**

In this phase, the product from the developing phase will be implemented to the subjects to get data. The researcher will get the data once the product is implemented to the subjects. This process of collecting data will cover some processes such as one-to-one, and small group. After this phase is done, the last phase will be proceeded.

### **Developing**

Developing phase is the phase where the researcher builds the plan to become a program from the previous step. The researcher develops the design by the guidance from experts' review process.

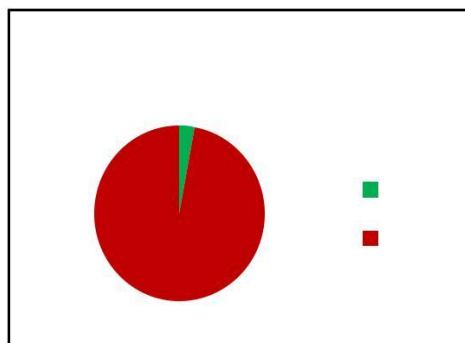
### **Evaluating**

The evaluating phase will be done by giving questionnaire to students of Muhammadiyah University of Metro in English major in the third semester of academic year 2015/2016. As for the steps, first, the researcher will take two students as one to one test.

These two students will observe and give comments about the product that will be offered. After the one to one product revision, the small group will be applied by taking at least five students. Finally, the field test will be done by involving students to give feedback of the revised product from the small group revision. The researcher does the final update of the product from the data taken in the field test. This phase will be the outcome of the product update from this research.

### **Discussion**

The Result of Try Out



The Graphic above showed that most of the students were lacking of basic components in English, vocabulary and grammar. There were thirty-six students which joined the test and only one student pass the standard. It means that the students need a better media to optimize their understanding in vocabulary and grammar.

### **Product Design**

From the analysis step, the researcher combines some variables to solve the problem of the students in English learning process. The researcher decides to help students learn about English learning media, especially for vocabulary and grammar. Based on the gap found in the analysis, students need an attractive and interactive media which give a big portion of role for them. The development of the media is the solution for the problem. The media is Role-Playing Game Application, also known as RPG Application. This kind of media gives a big portion of role which is attractive and interactive, because there are a lot of quests as a mission to be finished by the students. This media will give the students a real life situational responsibility without the real consequences. The interface, quests

or missions and the storyline will stimulate the motivation of the students to learn vocabulary and grammar in the media.

### Product Development

In this step, the researcher developed the product after the designing step. The media was developed from the materials for the university students in vocabulary and grammar subject to match the difficulty level of the students. As the blueprint of the product, the researcher entitled the product as “RPG Application as a Media to Learn English.

Vocabulary and Grammar”.

Then, the product was validated to the expert to improve its standard for the learning process needed.

### Expert Validation Result

Validation sheets for the experts were containing two aspects. The aspects were readability and implementability where each aspect has its own indicators for the questions. For the readability aspect, there are five indicators, namely font size, word choice, content, instruction base content and lay out. Implementability aspect has four indicators, they are simplicity level, clarity of instruction, students’ knowledge exploration and opinion based on RPG application. There are five score levels for each indicators, (1) Very Less, means the product is rejected to be used, (2) Less, means the product needs to be repaired, (3) Enough, means the product can be used with or without reparation, (4) Good, means the product can be used without reparation and (5) Very Good, means the product is excellently good to be used. The result of the validation is able to be seen in the appendices.

### Implementation

Implementation is the step of applying the product. The researcher used the product in the learning process. In the process, the students were very amazed to the product. They were not able to stop learning from the RPG application. They were interactively learn from the product. The learning process ran well, because all students learn seriously to the media.

### Evaluation

In the evaluation step, the researcher evaluated the product which had been implemented in the learning process. This process was done after the implementation of the product and before the revision of the product. The researcher revised the product according to weaknesses of the product. The weaknesses of the product are analyzed from the data which were collected from two steps, one-to-one and small group.

### One-to-One

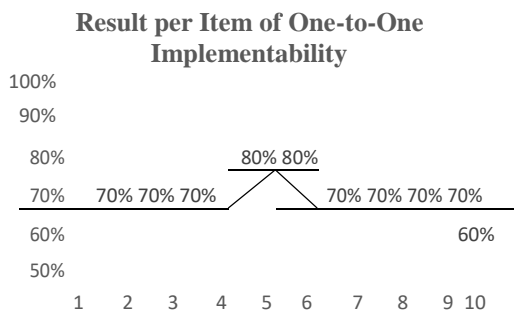
The Result of One-to-One Readability



Based on the graph above, generally, it can be concluded that the product was readable to be used. However, the researcher needs to revise the product especially about the clarity of the content. The score of the item is

only 60%, thus the researcher need to revise the product to optimize use of the product. The result of the readability questionnaires of one-to-one can be seen on the appendices.

**The Result of One-to-One Implementability**

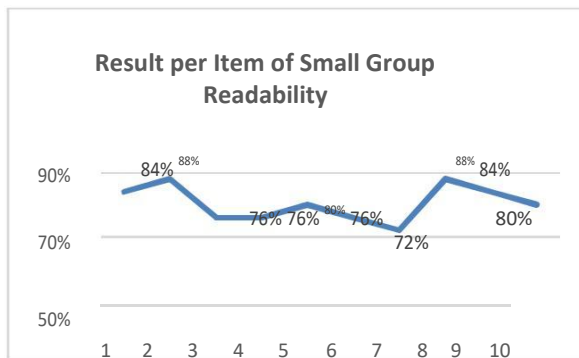


The score of the item above is only 60% which means the product needs to be revised. The result of the implementability questionnaire can be seen in the appendices.

**Revision of the First Product Testing**

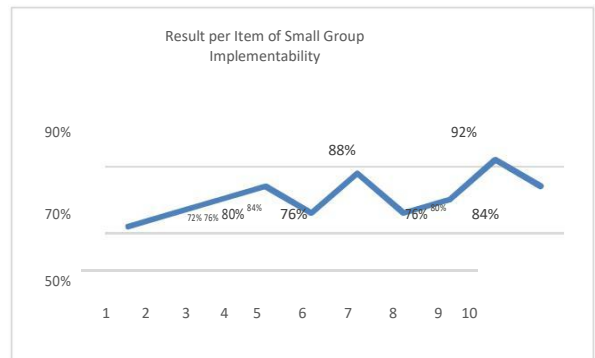
The revision focused on the clarity and the attraction of the content. The revision was done by giving a shorter explanation of the content and makes the content more connected to the students' life.

**The Result of Small Group Readability**



Based on the graph, there is a significant improvement of the seventh item, where before it was 60% to 72%. It means the product is good to use in the aspect of readability. The result of the output from the readability can be seen in the appendices.

**The Result of Small Group Implementability**



Generally, it can be concluded that the product improved in the Implementability aspect. The significant improvement can be seen in the attraction of the content in questionnaire item number ten, which was from 60% to 84%. However, the researcher needs to revise the product to optimize the product use to the final form of the product. The result of the implementability test can be seen in the appendices.

**Revision of the Second Product Testing**

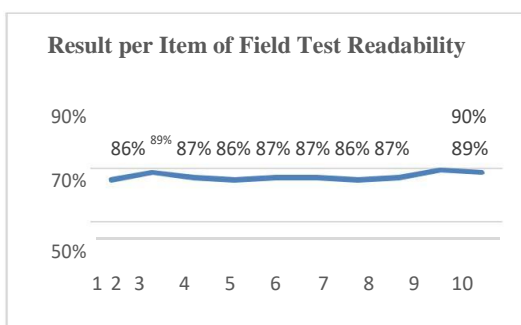
Based on the result of the second product testing, the researcher revises some weaknesses to optimize them. The researcher revised the word choice, the content variation, the clarity of the content and the punctuation. Then, the researcher adds some unpredictable storylines and plots to get the students' interest. Besides, the

researcher should revise the choice of words to make them more familiar in the students' daily use of vocabulary.

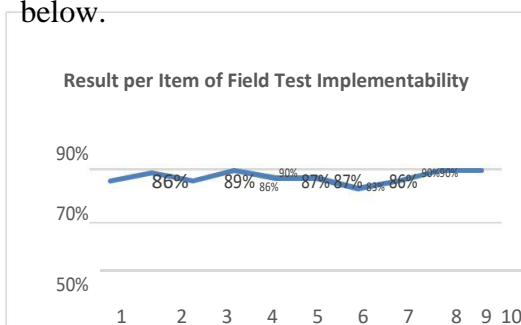
### Final Product

Finishing the ADDIE processes; analyzing, designing, developing, implementing and evaluating, the last part of evaluating was field test step. In this step, the researcher did the final revision to form the final product. Field test was done by taking the last data from the questionnaire from the bigger number of respondents. In this step, the respondents were twenty-seven students. The result of the field test of readability is explained in the graph below.

**The Result of Field Test Readability**



Based on the graph above, it can be concluded that the product is readable. Generally, the final product testing in field test has a score more than 80%. Besides, the implementability of the final product is explained in the graph below.



The graph above shows that, all of the scores are more than 80%, it means that the product is applicable to be used in the learning process. In conclusion, from the result of final product testing in the field test, from readability and implementability, the product has been ready to be used in the learning process for university students.

### CONCLUSION

After this research conducted in Muhammadiyah University of Metro in second semester of English students has done, the researcher takes some conclusions from this research. The first, English learning material can be taught in the new interactive and attractive media which gives a big role to the students so it can be more memorable. The second, RPG application can be very useful for the students in the learning process to take their interest and attention. From those conclusions, this product will help the lecturer to teach basic vocabulary and grammar not only in the class, but also in the language laboratory or the students' personal computer.

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